



Ministry
of Defence

Air Command Secretariat
Spitfire Block
Headquarters Air Command
Royal Air Force
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP14 4UE

Ref: FOI 2023/09662

[Redacted]

5 September 2023

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 August 2023 requesting the following information:

Dear Royal Air Force,

What are the current height and weight limits (maximum and minimum) for an individual to be eligible for aircrew selection? I understand that other anthropometric measures are relevant and are made, but I assume there are certain limits outside which one simply will not fit in the cockpit and that these are usually as initial screening criteria.

And what % of the male and female UK population do these ranges cover?

Of only the first part of the request is available, please provide that.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). A search for the information has now been completed, and I can confirm that some information in scope of the first part of your request is held.

The below information is held in Royal Air Force (RAF) Manual, Assessment of Medical Fitness, Air Publication (AP) 1269A, Leaflet 4-05 which contains information on anthropometric limits for each aircraft type for all three Services.

As your request was addressed to the RAF, it has been interpreted that your request is specific to the RAF.

For selection, the height and weight limits are as follows:

Height

Branch	Sitting Height (mm)		Buttock-Knee (mm)	Buttock-Heel (mm)		Functional Reach (mm)	Stature (mm)
	Min	Max	Max	Min	Max	Min	Min
Pilot/ WSO/WSOp	865	990	660	1000	1200	720	-

Weight

RAF Entry Standard (nude weight)	Min (Kg)	Max (Kg)
Pilot and WSO	59.5	94.1

Please note, WSO is used to denote a Weapons System Officer, and WSOp denotes a Weapons Systems Operator.

Regarding the second part of your request asking about what percentage of the male and female UK population these ranges cover, a search for the information has now been completed, and I can confirm that no information is held.

Under Section 16 (advice and assistance) you may find it helpful to know that RAF pilots begin flying training in the Prefect aircraft so although they can be measured within the limits of the height table above, consideration must be given to the below statement in AP1269A:

“Prefect. It is possible that aircrew with a sitting height of or greater than 975mm, when wearing a Mk10R aircrew protective helmet, will experience interaction with the cockpit canopy due to the canopy’s curved profile. As a consequence all aircrew whose sitting height is within 10mm of this 975mm measurement (i.e. Those with a sitting height of 965mm or greater) must undergo a functional cockpit assessment in accordance with AP1269A Leaflet 4-05. Persons with a sitting height greater than 947 mm should conduct a cockpit check before using the Mk 4A/4 or Mk 4B/4L helmets.”

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with this response or wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance Team, Ground Floor, MoD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MoD internal process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner’s website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours Sincerely,

[Original signed]

Air Command Secretariat